



Pardamat Conservancy in Maasai Mara Kenya. Photo courtesy of Roshni Lodha and MMWCA

KENYA

COMMUNITY CONSERVANCY POLICY SUPPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Kenya's eco-regions are global treasures and the heritage of Kenyan communities. In the last three decades, Kenya has experienced remarkable growth in the number of community conservancies who are implementing a variety of conservation strategies to protect these regions. The Kenya Vision 2030, the country's long-term development blueprint values the conservancy model and has made it a goal to have 20 percent of Kenya's land mass under conservancy management by 2030. To meet this goal, these ecoregions depend on strategic and collaborative conservation efforts.

Community and private conservancies in Kenya are important for conservation. Although private conservation is in infant stages, more than 5 million hectares of land have been conserved, providing important connectivity for biodiversity across entire eco-regions and between parks and community lands. Improved wildlife habitats, land connectivity, wildlife security, land tenure security, local governance institutions, community living standards/wellbeing, social cohesion, education, and health are tangible benefits of community conservancies. While these conservancies are implementing a range of conservation strategies, they face policy and institutional barriers to effectively carry out their biodiversity conservation and sustainable-development mandates.

The Community Policy Support and Implementation Program facilitates communities and landowners' participation in policy review processes and better access to policy information and incentives. Analyzing, standardizing, and facilitating policy change through this program will create an environment in which conservancies can deliver long-term sustainable social, economic, and ecological outcomes, including improved structures for governance and management of community land and secure land ownership rights, better living standards, gender and youth inclusiveness and resilience to climate change.

OUR WORK

The Community Conservancy Policy Support and Implementation Program works with communities and landowners spread across 11 landscape-based regional wildlife conservancies associations, representing approximately 167 community and private based conservancies in 28 counties in Kenya. The program's aim is to benefit 4,200 community wildlife scouts and over 930,000 conservancy households by:

- 1) improving land and resource policies,
- 2) improving community governance systems,
- 3) increasing conservation incentives,
- 4) increasing the inclusion of women and youth for more equitable distribution of conservancy benefits; and
- 5) increasing resilience to climate change and other external shocks affecting community conservancies.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The program has made tremendous achievements in the following areas:

- Influenced the creation and gazettement of key policies and legislations, including the National Wildlife Policy (Sessional Paper No.1 of 2020) and legal recognition of conservancies under the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act (WCMA) 2013. In addition, 19 subsidiary regulations were developed (five of them gazetted) to establish a public-private wildlife conservation trust fund for financing conservation efforts within conservancies, national parks, and reserves.
- Advocated for better land-tenure security including the recognition, protection, and registration of land in the Community Land Act of 2016.
- Mapped 196 conservancies which will be published in the second State of Conservancies Report. The report will document the evolution of conservancies and build the case for conservancies as a mechanism of conserving biodiversity and sustainable community development.
- KWCA advocated successfully at the national level for a historic allocation of \$10 million for conservancies through the COVID economic stimulus package, the Government of Kenya's first ever commitment to supporting conservancies.
- Improved service delivery of community conservancies through a variety of improved organization-development conservation tools. As a result, conservancies have stronger networking and communication among key stakeholder groups to diversify conservancy benefits, minimize conflicts and optimize best practices.
- Enhanced incentives for conservancy development including a toolbox for land planning, market oriented economic incentives and sustainable finance instruments were developed. These tools will give conservancies the opportunity to transform species, their habitats and ecosystem functions into valuable assets that yield returns to their families.

Budget: USD \$3,800,000

Duration: 2015 – 2021

Implementing Partners:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Kenya Wildlife Conservancies Association (KWCA)

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